An Inaugural Dissertation

on

"Solitary Vice," its consequences and treatment;

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by

A. Orpheus Pitcher,

Mount Pleasant,

Iowa.

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"Solitary Vice"

its consequences and treatment

Habits are soon assumed: but when we strive to strip them off; 'tis being flayed alive. Cowper

All admit the true duty of the Physician to be to heal the sick, but his duty does not end here. He is a watcher over the health of the community and must use his voice and influence against all the powers, that tend to degrade humanity and to shorten the longevity of mankind - and also he must by his profession employ his endeavors to benefit all the physical conditions and thereby advance the spiritual welfare of our race.

Since the Fall of man from a state of innocence disease has preyed on humanity as the result

of Sin; but it is to be feared that a much greater proportion of the suffering that is experienced, arises more from a disobidience to the Laws of Health than many imagine, and not so much from the transgression of the fair Mother of our race.

No other opinion can be entertained if we take a calm unprejudiced view of the habits fashions and excesses of all kinds which have been and are still perpetrated by every nation under Heaven. The laws of health are infringed and violated on every side and in almost every manner. Philanthropic and wise men have combined to trample this monster under foot - but it still continues to rage in many terrible

and insidious forms.

Our reasoning powers unite to tell us that disease should lessen among us, as it is the fruit of our own action and breach of nature's laws - and not the will of the all merciful and just Creator of man. If it is His will that we suffer the numerous and various ailments "flesh is heir to", it is worse than useless for us to battle against an omnipotent decree.

God wills and desires all mankind to live truly happy and to live in such a manner as to promote the most happiness here and hereafter.

For the diminution of human ailments, institutions are erected. Men educate themselves for the purpose of mastering and overcoming

these evils. They make it the object of their life. Why are they not more potent in their endeavors in healing the sick, in preventing disease and in promoting health and happiness. The reason is self evident. Doctors are as a class constantly transgressing the laws of their being by chewing and smoking tobacco drinking tea and coffee and in many instances spirituous drinks & other excesses of various descriptions to numerous to mention and thus they loose the effect of their teaching by the poor and example set before community. Attention should be directed to all departments of the human frame by the physician and he should be swift to detect the secret causes which sap the found-

-ations of health; and to bring his knowledge to stimulate and correct these vices and follies, many of which are practiced through ignorance and therefore innocently in a moral point of view, but working destruction and death mentally and physically.

This is the case with the vice of which I write. It is a delicate subject, but one that should have due attention

Prevalence

The prevalence of the habit of Onanism is proven to be great and extensive by the many advertised quacks and quack medicines in the newspapers of our land (with very few exceptions) purporting to cure troubles arising from practice

of the "solitary vice". But there are proofs from other sources of a more reliable nature.

John Ellis, author of "Avoidable causes of disease" asserts that three fourths of all the male population are subject to nocturnal emissions at times. Dr. Allcott says- "We believe that there is not a town in New England whose bills of mortality, from year to year are not greatly increased by this fearful scourge. We believe that a majority of our diseases and infirmities - our aches, our pains, and our deformities - after the age of puberty, are either increased or aggravated in this way. Believe it, did we say? Would to Heaven this expression were as strong as the

nature of the case and the character of the facts warrant. We know it is so, as well as, we know any thing of mathematical demonstration, or the actual testimony of our senses"

Dr. Snow of Boston confirms the foregoing quotation by saying. "Self pollution is undoubtedly one of the most common causes of ill health among the young men of this country. From the observations that I have been able to make, I am satisfied that the practice is almost universal. Boys commence at an early age; and the habits once formed, like that of intemperance, becomes almost unconquerable. In boarding schools and colleges, it obtains oftentimes without an exception. Hence the

many sickly students and the many young men of the most brilliant and promising talent who have broken their constitution and ruined their health as is said "by hard study" This is all that need be said on this point as much higher authority could not be quoted

Causes of Spermatorhea.

The "solitary vice" or masturbation is the most frequent cause although there are many others; such as sexual excesses; gluttony and sedentary habits combined; accumulation of hard fecal matter in the rectum producing irritation of the seminal vesicles; ascarides; drugs acting on the organs of generation

and urinary passages; diseases of the prostate gland; secondary gonorrhea; and according to some eminent authors on the subject this weakness may be transmitted by the parent to the offspring as scrofula, syphilis, consumption, &c.

The age at which the vice may be contracted

Children may become addicted to this vice at an early age even as soon as the fourth or fifth year. On this point, we have the statements of learned and practical men. I will copy the words of one in the ranks of Homeopathy to illustrate this point

Dr. Teste, in his treatise on the diseases of children says

"There is a number of children of both sexes, who are liable to contract this habit at the age of five, four, and even three years -- The first sentiment that this species of sensuality awakens in children is a sort of bashfulness incompatible with the innocence of their age. The bashfulness of a child at ten years is always suspicious"

Professor Foote in his lecture on this vice, related a case of a child in the nurse's arms being quieted by the dalliance of the penis and also at the time had erections. When the child grew older, it would blame the imitation by drawing itself across the floor, its hands being tied to prevent its handling the parts

The effects of the vice

There can be no seminal discharge before the age of puberty, but there is a nervous irritation that effects the system and weakens all the functions of organic life and produces numerous symptoms — among some of the most prominent are; capricious appetite. generally avoracious. derangements of the stomach and bowels; pains in the region of the liver and kidneys; general debility and weakness, especially in the limbs pain in the small of the back and in the cerebellum; pale countenance; blue semi-circles under the eyes; sunken eyes; dimness of sight and dullness of hearing; derangements of the

urinary organs; inflammation of the prostate gland; irritation of the urethra; still later in life impotence when awake and erections and seminal emissions during sleep; great emaciation; restlessness at night and talking in sleep.

In some cases the mental sphere is more terribly acted upon than the bodily frame. Some of the mental symptoms are loss of memory; difficulty of thinking; quarrelsomeness; love of solitude; taciturnity; peevishness; changeable disposition; aversion to study, which was formerly a pleasure; vacant stare; lasciviousness; mental application fatigues quickly.

The more frequent and copious the emissions of semen, the more marked the debility, the mental symptoms become more intensified and the whole being displays a perfect wreck of body and mind

Dr. Adam Clark says in reference to self pollution: "It is one of the most destructive evils ever practiced by fallen man. In many respects it is several degrees worse than common whore-dom, and has in its train more awful consequences. It excites nature to undue action, and produces violent secretions, which necessarily and speedily exhaust the vital principle and energy; hence the

muscles become flaccid and feeble, the tone and natural action of the nerves relayed and impeded, the understanding confused, the memory oblivious, the judgment perverted the will undetermined and wholly without power to resist; the eyes appear languishing and without expression and the countenance vacant; the appetite ceases, for the stomach is incapable of performing its proper office; nutrition fails; tremors fears and terrors are generated and thus the wretched victim drags out a miserable existence, till superannuated even before he had time to arrive at man's estate, with a mind often

debilitated even to a state of idiotism; his worthless body tumbles into his grave"

Of the other causes of Spermatorrhea. I will say little. Excessive sexual intercourse affects the system in a manner similar to masturbation but not in so distinctive a degree, provided the syphilitic taint is escaped

Gluttony and sedentary habits in combination will develop this disease and if left to itself and the same mode of life pursued will destroy the mind and the bodily health of the individual as it will down upon him without suitable means are employed to heal the ailment.

The constipation and ascandus are the result of a constitutional taint in the system, which must be eradicated by the proper remedies.

When drugs are the exciting cause they must be stayed, as the longer these irritating poisons are used, the weaker become the organs and the less will be the hopes of the recovery of health

Diseases of the prostate gland and secondary gonorhea must have the fit treatment which is Homopathic

Treatment

The treatment is extremely difficult and will require the exercise of much tact judicious care and sound judgment both

in regard to the advice and in reference to the selection of the remedy in the case

Prevention of the practice is the most important "desideratum" If a child is known to be addicted to the vice, care and prudent oversight are requisite to obviate the commission of the act and to preclude the dwelling of the mind on the filthy custom

Provided the child can be made ashamed of the habit by ridiculing it or by frightening it with a description of the fearful consequences that result from the practice: it is well. All laudable means must be used to obviate the difficulty.

The mind and body must be occupied with games and sports especially in the open air, which will give them proper and healthful employment and direct the attention in an agreable direction A strict supervision ought to be exrted over the child in the evening hours till sleep intervenes and care to have it arise as soon as it awakens in the morning.

Discretion is necessary to prevent the association of vicious company from which the child may learn the vice and be inclined to practice it. Now I will speak of the treatment when the patient is under the direct care of the physician.

The patients will generally be found to be insolute and fickle in their disposition and irregular in their mode of life and will violate the injunctions of their medical adoisers.

The seminal emissions take place most frequently in a half sleeping dreamy state or during profound sleep entirely without the knowledge of the individual.

There are instances in which the act of masturbation is performed during sleep and in such cases it is proper to tie the hands of the patient.

It is important to get the entire confidence of the patient and then depict the ruin he is bringing on himself mentally

and physically and by thus means obtain his cooperation in all endeavors to bring about a favorable and happy termination

Total abstinence from the vice is absolutely required, for without the removal of the cause, it is impossible to hope for any beneficial results from good advice or medicinal agents

The patient must have active and energetic exercise either in the gymnasium or on the farm. "To hope is to die". The exercise must be fatiguing but not exhausting so as to cause a weariness of muscle and limb, which will ensure a sound night's rest and rid the muscles of the spasmodic twitching that

often attends them who are not fatigued by exercise—

Exercise is a great curative aid in all chronic diseases and more attention should be frayed to calisthenics and gymnastics as a method of giving health beauty and symetry of form to the human frame

Galen said long ago that "he is the best physician who is the best teacher of calisthenics and gymnastics" He was feeble in health till his thirteenth year after that time by devoting several hours each day to gymnastics and calisthenics" he became strong and healthy"

Lord Bacon expressed the opinion thus; "that there was no disease among pupils that gymnastics and calisthenics could not cure"

Dryden sung in verse "The wise for cure on exercise depend"

The mind must have its task. The old adage that "an idle brain is the devils workshop" is preeminently true in this affliction. The mind should dwell on subjects of usefulness and better if the studies be of a nature calculated to elevate the moral character and by this mode of action and method of thinking. The mind will be led from the ailment, which

diversion is very beneficial to the person as all his troubles are aggravated and increased by dwelling upon them and meditating and fretting about them.

All literary productions that have a tendency to excite and inflame the amative faculty must be discarded. Filthy conversation of a like inclination must be avoided.

Lasciviousness in all its hues must be banished from the mental faculty as the mind has a powerful influence on the organs of generation either for good or for evil

"Called to the temple of impure delight"
He that abstains & he alone does right;
If a wish wander that way; call it home,
He cannot long be safe, whose wishes roam."

Hydropathists claim great curative results from their treatment in diseases arising from abuses of the sexual system. All that is required in this direction is to keep the pores of the skin well open and the body clean. Bathing in excess weakens the system and retards the cure. The temperature of the water should be tempered to the liking of the individual who is to use it; neither hot enough to cause a feeling of debility and exhaustion, nor cold sufficient

to produce severe chilliness and thereby shock the system so powerfully that reaction will not take place quickly as bathing is detetenous if reaction does not take place

On the subject of diet I can do no better than to give the suggestions of Dr. Woodward. He says: The regimen must be strict; the diet should be simple and nutritious and sufficient in quatity; it should be rather plain than light and abstemious; no stimulating drinks or condiments should be used; the supper should be particularly light and late

suppers should be wholly avoided. All stimulating drinks even strong tea and coffee should be discarded Cider and wine are very pernicious; Tobacco in all its forms not less so.

"As for suppers", says Mr Fowler on this subject" I prefer none at all"

Digestion should have entirely ceased before going to bed as there is more liability to nocturnal emmissions when digestion is still in operation during sleep. The prepuce should lie on either side and never on the back or face.

Lying on the back produces an irritation of the nerves that supply the genitals, and through a mysterious reflex action on the brain or mind causes dreams likely to be lascivious and also the patient should habitually rise early as soon as waking as the morning sleep is full of dreams likely to be amorous in their nature. As for Homeopathic treatment we must individualize - or be unsuccessful.

Some of the most prominent remedies are Aur Bell Chinin Conium - Kali Lyc Mer. Nat Mur Nux V and Nux Phos. Puls. Staph. Sul